



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COLUMBIA, ST. PETERS MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO COCAINE, MARIJUANA CONSPIRACY

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that three Columbia, Mo., men and a St. Peters, Mo., man pleaded guilty in federal court today to their roles in a conspiracy to distribute cocaine and marijuana.

Joseph Blair Nardi, 23, **Jonathan Eric Whitworth**, 20, and **Robertson Blake Alexander**, 20, all of Columbia; and **David Scott Steinbruegge**, 23, of St. Peters, pleaded guilty in separate appearances before U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this afternoon.

By pleading guilty today, each of the co-defendants admitted to participating in a conspiracy to distribute cocaine and marijuana from November 2002 to Nov. 23, 2003, in Boone County, Mo.

On Nov. 21, 2003, **Nardi** traveled from Columbia to **Steinbruegge's** residence in St. Peters after arranging a cocaine delivery. **Steinbruegge** expected to receive one ounce of cocaine as payment for facilitating the sale of three ounces of cocaine for \$3,000 between **Nardi** and another person, Graves said. When **Nardi** arrived, he and **Steinbruegge** were arrested by law enforcement officers who found 194.7 grams of cocaine, 215.4 grams of marijuana and a loaded semi-automatic handgun in **Nardi's** Jeep Cherokee.

Whitworth was arrested on Nov. 23, 2003, when he attempted to purchase cocaine from a co-defendant in a controlled buy at a Columbia motel. **Whitworth** admitted that he had also purchased cocaine from **Alexander**, who was arrested at his apartment later the same day. Law enforcement officers found two plastic bags containing .29 grams and 53.98 grams of cocaine in **Alexander's** apartment.

Under federal statutes, each of the co-defendants could be subject to a sentence of up to

20 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1 million. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Lynn. It was investigated by the St. Charles County, Mo., Regional Drug Task Force, the St. Peters, Mo., Police Department; the Columbia, Mo., Police Department; the Drug Enforcement Administration; and MUSTANG (the Mid-Missouri Unified Strike Team And Narcotics Group).

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow